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CORRESPONDENCE

NOTES.

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, SOUTH KENSINGTON.
—A collection of Spode porcelain, comprising vases, cups and saucers, &c., has recently been presented to the Museum by Miss Helen Mary Gulson, in memory of her uncle the late Mr. Josiah Spode, of Hawkesyard, Rugeley, Staffordshire.

A COMMITTEE MEETING was held lately to consider the question of holding a large exhibition in London each year of "work for reproduction." It consisted of Messrs. Walter Crane, Joseph Pennell, Selwyn Image, Laurence Housman, and James J. Guthrie. It was decided that the first exhibition could not take place until next year. Mr. Guthrie, as honorary secretary, announces that further notices will be sent out later in the present year. It will be an "invitation" exhibition pure and simple.

THE interesting collection, illustrating the coinage and currency of the Chinese Empire, brought home by Lord Charles Beresford from his recent mission to China, has been generously lent by him to the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington. This collection includes a series of silver taels of various sizes in the form of cast ingots in the rough, with a pair of scales with brass and ivory weights for estimating the value, and some fragments used as small change. There is a set of dollars of different nationalities which pass in China, among them being the new British dollar, first issued in 1898 and coined in India. Among the copper coinage is a collection of 10,000 cash strung together in bundles by means of the central hole which is a characteristic of Chinese copper coins, representing £1 in English money. This exhibit has been placed in the Chinese Section in the Cross Gallery behind the Imperial Institute. The entrance to this gallery is through the Indian Section, Victoria and Albert Museum.

ANYONE who wants designs for leather work or canvas work can scarcely do better than enlist the help of the Cordelova Company, 74, Pitt Street, Edinburgh. Of course in the ordinary way these designs are carried out in the material which bears this name, but many of them can equally well be applied to leather. Ceilings, friezes, walls, and dados can all be done by the Cordelova process, and the designs are admirable. A glance at the catalogue reveals an astonishing range of these. Some of them are founded upon the old Tudor linen pattern, others are in the Adams style, others again are purely modern, others as purely antique. They can be made in high or low relief, and in either are charmingly effective.

WE have received a publication illustrative of designs in Salamander issued by the United Asbestos Company, Limited, 158, Charing Cross Road. It is in the form of a catalogue, and is well worth attention for the sake not only of the beauty of many of the designs, but also for the interest attaching to the material 'Salamander' itself. As is well known, this is a composition of which the basis is asbestos. It is therefore absolutely non-inflammable; and as such is clearly a very great protection against the risks of fire. For it is used to cover both walls and ceiling. No one could guess from looking at it that it was not wood or moulded plaster, so cleverly is it made and applied. The designs are many of them really beautiful. This material is well known to builders and architects, who all speak strongly in its favour, and very fairly so.

THE pretty custom, bids fair to gain ground, of sealing letters with a gold device. To Mr. Julius Hoffman, of Stuttgart, belongs the credit of this idea. He has brought out boxes each containing a collection of these *siegelmarken*. Many of them are very beautiful, and all are admirably modelled. They are about as large as a shilling and of different shapes. Among the subjects represented are modern ones such as racehorses and their jockeys, peacocks, owls, Maribon storks, and other birds, and heads of beautiful women. The classic subjects include Cupids in many relationships, Venus, Pegasus, and many more.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of THE ARTIST.

SIR,—As a member of the Society of Art Masters from its foundation, I feel I cannot let the letter of 'Briton' in your July issue pass without comment. Such a piece of egotism by a confirmed egoist I have never before read. So long as 'Briton' was not directly touched, and fancied himself secure, he refused to become a member of the Society, or lend a helping hand to his poorer brethren, who cannot say 'I am the head of one of the largest Art schools in the three kingdoms.' But directly he feels the shoe begin to pinch, and finds he is not the great man he thought he was, he begins to shout, and condescends to become a member and get everybody out of their difficulties.

Had he been a member, as he ought to have been, he would have discovered that the Society have 'a programme' and have so far been able to do good work without him, and will, no doubt, be able to do so in future.

Yours faithfully,

ANOTHER BRITON.

To the Editor of THE ARTIST.

SIR,—I do not think some of your correspondents are quite fair in their views of the Art Masters' Society. This Society cannot be expected to do more than it is justified in assuming. Its members are very worthy men and they know their own powers, being aware that the day is past for men of their calibre to take leading positions. They can do very useful work when they are under the guidance of men of superior qualifications. I know myself an institution where useful work is being done by an art master under the guidance of a head master who has not wasted his time in getting certificates. Finding his picture painting did not succeed as well as he and his friends considered his talent deserved, he was appointed head of an art school at a reasonable salary. A certificated art master was engaged who, for the balance of funds left after paying the unappreciated artist's salary, does all the routine work, putting in four days' and five evenings' work weekly. And when I tell you that the head of the school can manage it by attending about six hours weekly you can see what useful work is being done. If only our elementary schools could be managed in the same way we might congratulate ourselves. But, unfortunately, the National Union of teachers steps in and sees that what it calls the vested interests of its individual members are not interfered with. I have even known the National Union prevent one of its members being discharged from his duties and cause several others to be reinstated after dismissal. But the Art Masters' Society does not do this. It is wise in its own way. All due praise to its leaders for understanding so well the true position of its members as willing, humble subordinate workers in the field of art education.

Yours truly,

EDGAR EMPSON.